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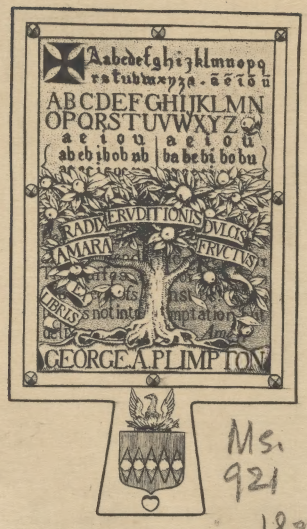

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The Gift of George A. Plimpton

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The Gift of Geo

Act, which, anon, [illegible] to explain amend & alter the former one of Queen Anns which intermediate Act was founded on the shameful pre-tence of a majority on a certain occasion, never enqui-red into at the Admiralty, & voted unknowingly by the House of Commons to gratify the self importance of an individual, who perhaps may be remembered by it as Paul Philips was, by his black & white cur with one ear"

A curious remarkable circumstance learned from the Journal is, that William Harrison waited nine hours without being called into the room. A discussion as long as the battle of Waterloo argues that, for the first time, the Manager of the common concern must have found great difficulty in persuading his partners he knew the subject better than any body else could tell him. — The Author conjectures that the inhumanity with which he treated the Claimant being obvious, attracted the atten-tion of the dispensers from the superior attributes of the P. R. S. It appears that the Watch Timekeeper had remained all this time sealed up at the Admiralty; that is from the end of October to that of April; during which period of half a year it would have been of the greatest service in shorten his labour & difficulties, had he commenced the work they demanded required from him. It should be observed

180 continued

although he gave up his private business,

~~than any other definition that the question admits of~~

than any other definition the question admits of.

They may be concluded

that Mr. Kendall, by his agreement, required two years for the completion of the Timekeeper he was to make, "after Mr. Harrison's Watch should be put into his hands" which makes the constant refusal of it to John Harrison savour ~~much~~ more of personal ~~malice~~ hatred in the P. R. S. ~~that there is no knowing how the Philosophical Transactions may be adorned~~ — The meeting was uncommonly numerous, there being twice as many Commissioners present as met on ordinary occasions, & which was as uncommon, we find in the list the Lords Hawke, Rodney & Howe, whom it was not likely the Manager ~~should~~ would succeed in mistifying, or making converts of, as he had done Lord Egmont. Nevertheless it was, ~~to have been~~ wearied out, ~~with~~ by the learned demonstrations of the noble Lord, which hourly waxed

~~As~~ as tedious as a twice told tale,
Vexing the dull ear of a drowsy man.

How the votes were divided cannot be said, but from an important turn which the proceedings took, it may be fairly concluded that the University Gentlemen, ~~actively formed the Lunar party, became, with a discontented orthodoxy, the auxiliaries of a genius to be certified, as his lordship, to direct "mundane affairs," without prejudice to Moore, or Vix Stellarum; but their despised~~

-tudies however they might smell of the midnight oil
dicted not a particle of the Lacedemonian reverence for
the hoary head, & without the least regard for the grey
hairs of a life at once so laborious & so irreproachable;
with an utter oblivion moreover of the assurances he had
received from them or their predecessors for above forty
years, of a direct contrary conclusion, if the Timekeeper
~~returned successful from the West Indies, they~~ not only
refused to promote the ostensible purposes of Lord Morton's
Act, by facilitating the construction of two or more Time
-keepers, but evincing the presence of the vomes peccavi,
which they wanted the angel Gabriel, according to Mahom
-et's legend, to squeeze out of their hearts, they supported the
merciless enemy of John Harrison in delivering up the Timekeep
-er to the Astronomer Royal, the head & chief of their scien
-tific sect, to be by him tried & reported on as to its merits.
And — from circumstances which need not be repeated, if the
reader recollects what passed at Barbados, [redacted] with-
-out the smallest prejudice to D^r. Maskelyne's abilities to
do honour to the institution at Hamstead Hill, a more un-
-fit person could not have been found in either hemisphere.
— It is unnecessary to enquire to whom the Watch should
have been given; the trial itself being entirely unreasonable
& improper at [redacted] that juncture; it created a very injuri

with a inveteracy
rancour malignity, which the philosopher Spenser could
never have reconciled to "the fitness of things", either tempora-
ry, or Eternal, was

occur before the end of the following

was the

his usual

-ous hindrance to the public interests, for though Lord Morton determined the Inventor should never have the successful Timekeeper again; yet not bearing the same enmity to Mr. Kendall, who besides would have required his contract without that advantage; he was to have it "as soon as the trial should be over" which by their calculation could not [redacted] February [redacted] — a delay of ten months. It is indeed alleged in the minutes that he might be preparing himself mean while, but the scene is too transparent to conceal his Lordship & the Doctor, who had the sole management of affairs, playing their cards into each others hands: & never were public premises more palpably made a stalking horse for private motives.

The reader who by this time is sufficiently behind the curtain, may smile while he anticipates the fact. — No sooner [redacted] resolution above passed, but the Manager, with provident foresight, produced from his pocket a plan for the trial of the Timekeeper at Greenwich; and the Author would not desire a clearer proof of his incompetency, & utter unfitness to interfere in such concerns. But, to the point —

"Ordered — That it [the Timekeeper] be kept in the "Royal Observatory at Greenwich; in a box having two dif-"ferent locks, fixed to the floor, or wainscot; with a plate "of glass in the lid, or side of the said box; and that it be

" compared as often as convenient with the Regulator, & the
" variations set down.

" That the form which Mr. Harrison observed in
" winding it up, be exactly followed.

" That the Lords of the Admiralty be desired to give
" directions, that one of the Captains, or Lieutenants, of Greenwich
" Hospital may attend every day at the Observatory at a sta-
" -ted hour, to witness the winding up of the said Watch, &
" the comparison of it with the Regulator.

" That a Key of one of the Locks be kept at the
" said Hospital for the use of those Officers; & the other to
" remain at the Royal Observatory, for the use of the Astrono-
" -mer Royal, or his Assistant.

" That the Timekeeper be tried in various positions
" till the beginning of July next, & from thence till the end of
" February following, in a horizontal position with the face upwards.

" That the variation of the Timekeeper be noted
" down, & a register of the Barometer & Thermometer, at the
" times of comparing the same with the Regulator regularly
" kept & attested by the Royal Astronomer, or his Assistant,
" & such of the Officers above mentioned as shall from time to
" time the Timekeeper wound up & compared as aforesaid.

~~Excepting~~ The directions ~~to~~ try ~~the~~ The
Watch in different positions till July, to which there are
strong objections, that we waive all; this is passable enough
& nobody needed to pick a hole in so goodly a texture;
but as an alteration of the clock was all the same as an
error in the Timekeeper; & the same rules above laid down

become regatory & ridiculous without this backward aper-
-ture for mischief could be stopped, it will now be asked
—where is the other part of the plan, which was to pre-
-vent the regulator from being tampered with; and lo!—
—it is no where to be found, unless in the moon, a celebra-
-ted receptacle for the lost, or absent, wits of philosophers
like his Lordship; where they would have been found cheek
by jole with the craniological system of Sir Joseph Wilton
& his Bully; for a Tweezer case would have held the witch-
-ery of all three as easily as Macbeth's cauldron, or the
powderous case allotted to his Grace of Wellington. — If the
attention Lord Morton gave to the case of John Harrison had
not been absorbed in his own perfections & display, if it
had been worth two bawbees, it would not have left
him unacquainted with the plan proposed by D. Nalley,
for trying the Timekeeper six months on board a ship
in the Downs, which was to communicate by signal with
Deal Castle. In this it is directed — "that the astronomi-
"cal clocke should be locked up in the room where it stands,
"& the keys of the said room put in possession of some pro-
"-per person, to be named by the Commissioners of Longi-
"tude, & by W. Harrison; and that no person should be
"allowed to take the time from the said clocke by a watch,
"or otherwise". — So much precaution was thought necessary
to prevent any unfair dealing with the clocke, as with the

timekeeper, & yet this consideration is totally wanting
in his lordships plan; who has left it to be presumed
from his apparent ignorance of the above, which appears
in most of the periodicals of the day, & is copied here from
the Annual Register, that the extent of his reading was
too circumscribed to befit his situation in life; & that
he was deficient in such information as the present sub-
-ject particularly called for: [redacted] had he been imported from
the Sister Island, & not of Scotch manufacture, this
specimen of his abilities might have been quoted as a
choice bull of that country.

The answer which, after he had waited nine hours
William Harrison was told by the Secretary would be sent to
his Father, was not forthcoming in several days that he had
to traverse between Red Lion Square & the Admiralty: a circum-
-stance far from indifferent to mention; as the copy of their
resolution could easily have been handed him in a quarter
of an hour; and which, when combined with the internal evidence
the minutes themselves furnish; and the recollection that un-
-der the commission of the 2d. Geo. 3d. the 1st. Messrs. had figured as far
totum to the whole concern [redacted] smells of "something rotten
in the state of Denmark." No secretary to the Board, in de-
-signating the Astronomer Royal would, on his own responsi-

(& so it is in the copy forwarded to Red Lion Square) would have the reconve-

a sample of the opposition [redacted] of this

so reputed

-bility innovate with such cheap affectation, by transposing the words: for Royal Astronomer, [illegible] eminence of being every where taken to signify one of the royal family, & had better remained with "words "conveyed in northern air." — But waiving his Lordships philological emendations; the answer itself, keeping in mind that they had refused him all manner of facilities, without assigning any reason for so doing, is so coarse & repulsive, so utterly word for word [illegible] imperium in imperio, that by this time we are left in the general conclusion — The minutes of the Board nominally so called, were not @ written out by Mr. Pretson, in the usual manner, & read to the members before they separated. William Harrison having to pass & repass many days before he could obtain a copy of them (which in no case would have occupied above an hour) was not a casualty at this period; for it is complained subsequently (October 22.) that it was always a "long while, & attended with much journeying backwards & "forwards, before he could get any thing from the Admiralty. The ready solution of which is — that it was not in the power of the Secretary, or the clerks, to comply with his request. They could neither make out a copy, nor allow him to save them the Trouble, simply because these official re-ports were concocted, dished up & supplied, from the inte-

"such sort of people"

judgment or his prudence having

of Timekeepers, Although of the greatest importance to the
public, is unknown to this ~~day~~
neither thank the P. R. S. nor the other parties who
sanctioned the suppression of it.

-rior of his Lordships domicile in Brook Street: where they either cost him daily vexations, or having no consideration for the time & patience of others, least of all The delays of this kind cost, which regularly occurred while he was in power, want no Sedrophel to explain them. — Independent of the answer to the letter, a specimen of the utility of these procrastinations is shown by his [redacted] sinecure insertion to this elaborate plan for restraints on the examination at Hamstead Hill, while that for a manufactory of Timekeepers is [redacted] to the postic of this day: for which we opine posterity will [redacted] P. S. if the affair succeeds then

"At a meeting of the Commissioners appointed by
"Act of Parliament, &c.

"A Letter of this date [26th April] from Mr.
"John Harrison was read, expressing his concern to see his
"Invention neglected, & lying dormant; desiring authority
"to prosecute the same, as fast as he can, & proposing new
"terms to the Board.

"Resolved. That he be acquainted, that if there is
"any neglect in the prosecution of his Invention, it is his own;
"and that so soon as he shall have made other Timekeepers
"(which being in the plural number must imply two at least)
"of the same kind as the Watch machine of his construction,
"now in the possession of this Board; which Timekeepers shall,
"upon Trial be found to be of a sufficient correctness to determine

1788

" the Longitude at sea, within the degree of exactness required
" by the Act of the last year of his present Majesty's reign he
" will be entitled to the remaining £10,000 directed to be paid
" him by the said Act.

(a copy) Jn.° Ibbetson

The Claimant on receiving this, & finding the Commissioners were to meet again on the 24.th of May, drew up another letter, as follows.

" My Lords & Gentlemen

" I received a Minute from your Secretary, as from your Board of the 26.th of last month, in answer to my letter, dated the same day, wherein he says, if I understand him right, that if there be any neglect in the prosecution of my Invention, it is mine; & that as soon as I shall have made other Timekeepers of the same kind as that in the possession of your Board, which upon trial shall be found sufficiently correct to determine the Longitude at sea within the degree of exactness required by the Act passed the last year of his present Majesty's reign, I shall be entitled to the remaining £10,000 directed to be paid me by the said Act. Permit me, my Lords & Gentlemen, [redacted] with the greatest submission, to trouble you this once more on a subject in my opinion infinitely more interesting to the public than to myself.

" The Act of the 12.th of Queen Anne (upon the faith of which I have worked 40 years) sets forth that whoever by any method shall discover the Longitude at sea to certain limits therein prescribed shall be entitled to rewards therein men-

182

-tioned. Through the noble encouragement of this honour-
-able Board, & also that of the most learned & ingenious
Persons to whom I communicated some of my ideas & princi-
-ples, I have been enabled from time to time to prosecute
in the most ardent manner an Invention thought worthy
of publick attention till I brought it to the degree of per-
-fection you have been pleased to certify. This Act of the
12th. of Queen Anne is worded in plain & positive terms
which I have certainly complied with, & thereby have acquired
a right to the greatest reward mentioned in the said Act;
which was proved to the honourable House of Commons
on two different occasions; on one of which a right honour-
-able Member of your Board 8th 1742 acquainted the Committee of
the whole House that some of the most eminent Lawyers had
been consulted & were unanimously of opinion that I was justly
entitled to the greatest reward mentioned in the said Act: by
the experiments I had made in obedience to the same, in
pursuance of the directions given by your honourable
Board: one of whom I have great reason to believe to have
been his Majesty's Attorney General at that time. — It is
now alleged I must comply with a subsequent Act (obtained
without my consent) before I can receive the last moiety
of my reward, which was undoubtedly due to me in virtue
of my compliance with the former Act. — What is still to be
done to fulfill this last Act, the honourable Board have
not been pleased to tell me. In my opinion it is left for
you to give orders about it as it is you that are (by this
Act) to be satisfied. The Act says, other Timekeepers must
be made, & tried to your satisfaction; but it does not
say how many others, nor what trial shall be sufficient.

" It rests with you to determine, & if you will please to
" interpret this part of the Act, if it is in my power I will
" be ready to execute your commands: but no man chuses
" to begin a journey, or to any piece of work without some
" view where it shall end.

" Having long [half a year] waited for your instruc-
" tions, & fearing I might be thought remiss in my duty to
" the public, I presumed to deliver you proposals for your
" consideration. I did not mean that such a plan & no other
" should be pursued; nor did I in the least mean to dictate to
" Board. I only desire to be informed by this honourable Board
" what will be deemed a reasonable satisfaction.

Should the honourable Board think proper to pay
" me down any sum of money according to the proposal I have
" made, or any other plan, I am willing to give any reasonable
" security for the same. That is to say, if it is not applied to
" the intended use in a time to be limited, the money shall
" be returned: but it is to be understood that such money,
" so paid down, shall not be deducted from the last moiety of
" my reward. — And further, if the honourable Board shall
" think it necessary that any other person shall be instructed
" by me in the making of Timekeepers, & will allow an adequate
" sum for that purpose, I will give the same security for the
" performance of such agreement: as this is the only method
" by which my Invention will get into the world in any reason-
" able time.

With permission, give me leave to tell you what
" time will produce. — The plan which you are now pursu-
" ing may be attended with fatal consequences in
" reference to my Invention; for it is not in the power of any

" -oured Sir John

man to make & adjust such Timekeepers till he has either had experience, acquired by his own labour, or communicated to him by me. After ages will hardly believe that a mechanical Invention, & one that allows of great improvement in its construction should be taken from the man that invented it, & given to another to prosecute.

" I hope the honourable Board will pardon my manner of writing, & excuse my style, as writing is not my province; & as this very probably may be the last letter I may have the honour ever to write to you on this public concern. I hope it will not be wrong construed; as I desire no more from it than to shew I am willing to do all in my power for the good of mankind, & if, permitted shall be happy so to do; if not, I must be content, & in my old age say, I have used my utmost efforts for the good of my fellow creatures, in the improvement of that talent which it had pleased God to give me: & have acted through the scene of life an honest & honourable part. I have the honour of subscribing

my Lords & Gentlemen

Red Lion Square 24th May your very devoted, &c.

" Some days before the meeting of this Board, William Harrison showed the above letter to Sir John Cust, who advised him by no means to deliver it to the Board, without he had a mind to make quite a breach with them; for Sir John said he perfectly knew their minds, & that it would be the consequence were that letter sent in: He consequently offered to Dictate a letter for Mess.rs Harrison. — William Harrison af. [illegible], he did not want to quarrel with the Board Commissioners, but that he never would be persuaded but that

They had been very ill used by them, by being kept out of
a reward which they had most justly & lawfully been
entitled to. But nevertheless they would not be the first
that would make an open breach; & as the case now stood
they only wanted to know what the Commissioners wished to be
done before they should receive the other moiety of their
reward; for the new Act said that other Timekeepers must
be made, but it does not say, how many others; & they
were also to be tried to the satisfaction of the Commissioners; but
it did not say what trial would be satisfactory: & there were
things they wanted to know. — Sir John said, that the above
letter would not in the least tend to gain what they wanted.
He therefore desired, as a friend, that this letter might
not be sent in, but that another might. — Sir John then dic-
tated the form of another letter to Mr. Harrison; & told him,
if that was sent in, he would try to get an answer to it, agree-
able to his request. — [redacted] For the present we postpone the insertion
of the letter.)

There could not be either verbatim, or
in the spirit a more gross departure from the 12th. of Queen Anne
on the faith of which the Claimant had commenced his labours
(of 40 years) than by no distinctness, or identity, attaching to the
trial, or trials, now ordered. It has been mentioned that Lord Mor-
ton never forgave his [redacted] having been defeated in enforcing
his own construction of the Act, the 3d. George 3. but from his re-
solutions not having been published, the public never
knew that the uncertainty the Claimant complains of there

he says that " no man chuses to begin a journey, or to enter
" upon any piece of work without some prospect where it
" shall end." was transferred from the b.[k] of those abortive de-
-crees saying, that " when such Watches are finished [at the
cost of £800, to wit] they shall be tried in such manner as
the Commissioners shall judge proper." His applications on
this point, though met by a constant refusal to explain,
might not have occasioned the open breach their kind advi-
-ser warned them of; nor yet the prediction of the failure of
the scheme for bringing forward the Invention by employing
Mr. Kendall: though it would needs have been very unpala-
-table to a genius who knew intuitively what was best to
be done, & wanted no adviser: albeit though he condescended
to commune to some purpose with the Astronomer Royal, &
the Lunar wits; but the gist & bearing of the whole affront
would have been the allusion to the £298 □ Parliament having
been pointedly omitted. This would have made " the gabled
" edifice ", most of your Lectr, the Longitude would have
entered upon & the Solution rendered at this in-
-stant, he would have called it. But by a misnomer; from
overlooking the circumstance. There is too much reason to
believe he had simply omitted both the country & the Divi-
-dend part of his obligation, for it would be doing in-
-justice to suppose he was having his Majesty's commission
to whom they would be concerned in so near & dirty a trick

without any intention to act on it, of it should not prove favourable to the wishes of of the Manager & his learned supporters. This course, which a scavenger was competent to have advised

as that of taking the opinion of the law officers of the crown

was worthy of a man whom nature, notwithstanding his high rank, had destined for the lowest grade in society; & whose embrio might have been numbered among the evils that issued from Pandora's box. The authoritative message by Mr. Grey (page) too unhappily shows that like the herd of politicians in the Tatler, the chief of whom "was a great assertor of paradoxes". the Board of Longitude (with one exception) "gave themselves up unanimously to the opinion" of such a knowing one; whose discovery no doubt like that of his prototype, "was backed with so many "broken hints, & such a show of depth & wisdom." — If there is any document in the archives of the Admiralty likely to rescue the Gentlemen who composed the Board, September 12th 1765, from a comparison that may be thought too severe, or too ludicrous, the Author, feeling as an Englishman on the subject, will cheerfully give it insertion, if another edition is called for. But if nothing appears to extenuate the neglect to question the Earl of Morton concerning his having a valid majority at the first & second meetings under the 3d George 3d. it is assumed that any set of persons who could give themselves up implicitly to the guidance of an individual of whom there is no satisfactory evidence that he was an adept in any thing but the cunning of low life; whose

word could be more believed on than that of Charles 2d. & who could never be acquitted of consulting his own enmity under public pretences — professions which his constant Deviation of whatever would promote the work in the Inventors hands disgracefully contradicted: we say that such landsmen sleeping on their watch, & wanting the boatswain both with his cat & call, could not have complained if some "grey goose" quill master of the ceremonies had seated them in due form among the "curiosities in their kind" as Addison calls the sagacious folks alluded to. Nor if they were introduced in the veil of Mowship to the geographer who found "there were large tract of land about the pole, that were inhabited neither by papist, nor protestant" or the nautical informant who discovered "it would be an easy matter to beat the Pope at sea."

Being vested with unlimited power to drive the world before him, if he could in all matters touching the payment of the reward, the first fruits of this mismanagement of their trust (for what else was such a deputation?) was probably this resort to counsel, the rather, as he could do it without a fee; a particular not to be noticed in other clients, nor yet to be overlooked in one who either constitutionally or from education seemed accustomed to appropriate the labour of others for nothing, if he could. — Had the legal construction of the case been in his favour, it will not admit the slightest doubt, that the unsurmountable difficulty thus discovered would have been proclaimed on the highways & repeated from Whitehall to Whitechapel, with divers appropriate comments. — But though the sentiment of professional men of the first rank

did not

The convenience of the Manager

was oftoons laid on the shelf "for the moth & rust to corrupt"

Then precisely the ~~point of time~~ period when this resort
was ~~made~~ or
to the Law officers occurred, & what part of the Board
took their opinion does not appear; ~~Indeed the transaction~~
~~altho' striking, is great importance to the question, could~~
~~leave the matter in no means clear~~ ~~have been ascertained~~ But for the manly, intrepid, & humane
consideration of Sir John Lort Jervis the Discoverer ~~of the~~ ~~R.~~
~~he never succeeded to the perfectibility of the R.~~ ~~estimates his merits half as high as the Lesser parts~~

The nature of the circumstance however indicates the appeal
to have occurred before the passing of Lord Morton's bill;
& this belief is confirmed by a printed tract in
1770. But as no one person would suppose the Board of
Longitude, or any other Board, after first consulting coun-
-sel, would then immediately proceed to act directly con-
-trary to the conduct prescribed, or the advice given,
to them,
this strange anomaly, which makes the case of John Harrison
unlike any other before or since calls for an explanation.
which need not be fetched from afar.

It will be recollected that at the separate
~~Sitting on the 20th of February 1765~~

were thus entirely in favour of the Claimant, it [illegible] followed that there was a necessity [illegible] to conform to such decision if it suited square not with his convenience. And the moral obligation to do justice to [illegible] our Mechanician, which to common apprehension could not be separated from the judgment of the long robe, [illegible] laid on the shelf by consent of all parties except Mr Pole but this Northern Peer fully embued with vulgar cunning but a stranger to the sentiments which became his rank, knew that the Commissioners of Longitude, whose organ he either was, or affirmed to be (for his former conduct [illegible] the supposition) could be controled only by Parliament, which would be unwilling to interfere. Here there was [illegible] acknowledge himself defeated, & to say "Harrison get all the money" He had his triumph therefore; but it was only of such a description as may be [illegible] recognized among the disputants in very pothouse. — The wit of man (or woman) cannot divest such manœuvres of personal & sinister motives, very different from those the public were expected to give the Commissioners credit for, who, when they published their proceedings under the Act & after [illegible] amend & alter the 12th Queen Ann omitted not a single circumstance to clear up the origin of that measure. It was indeed consistent with worldly wisdom that they should not; for had [illegible] one half been known, besides the bravado which Mr Gray was desired to repeat to William Harrison, his Father, the grave discussions at the Admiralty; when it is [illegible] that after hearing Lord Morton's plans

197 Commission, where his Lordship pretended to a majority in nubibus, he assumed all present to be of his opinion, without taking the trouble to collect ~~the sense~~ their sentiments. The same intolerable self-sufficiency & unfounded assumptions, as might be expected, are conspicuous at the Commission of Longitude, & cannot be viewed without a forcible suspicion that James Earl of Morton was not in fact authorized by the Board to procure the Act to amend, explain & alter; that there was more of imaginary persuasion than of tangible ~~reality~~ in reality; The majority supposed on this occasion, though there is not the same distinct evidence to nullify it.

~~A particular difficulty to reconcile with regular proceedings will be noticed, which is~~ ~~to account for the part of Morton,~~ ~~he combined the most contemptible private motives~~ ~~with public pretexts;~~ to £142

That not one of those Commissioners who were Town residents ~~paid attention they should have given to his conduct.~~ — Had the Author been required

his cause his remonstrance

~~that~~ ~~code or the merits of his measures could be without it~~ give it. — So thought & reasoned the descendant of one of the noblest families in Europe,

-tion concerning himself & the other Commissioners under the 3.d George 3.d the Board duly weighed & considered it" could have excited no more respect outside those walls, than the nods & shrugs of the whispering sirs of Bradford. How could they weigh his allegations without first enquiring into the truth of them? & where was their consideration in neglecting that? — In this manner the deformity of a transaction which, above sixty years ago, finally drew the commiserating attention, & in accordance with his consistent character, instigated the patriotic & humane exertions of George 3.d to [illegible] the deprecated injury resulting both to the individual, & to the country from the misconduct of the Commissioners of Lon-gitude, in delegating the high powers ~~of their office to persons totally unfit to wield it,~~ they were entrusted with the slightest cross examination would have shown them if the clamor of party, or the torpor of indolence, had not superseded ~~their~~ public duty. Had the Author been ~~required~~ to forego the preceding details, & to make his election of some prominent circumstance for a Tuberum, whereon his argument should turn, in the case which George 3.d will be found to have advocated at the expence of no small time & other sacrifices, it would have been this opinion of counsel; re-jected because the master genius could do without it. He needed not to remove the law, when he was in a condition to ~~[illegible] it. This descendant of one of the noblest families in Eu-rope~~, as if to illustrate the truth of the poet's position — Pope's sentiment

Worth makes the man, & want of it the fellow,

cite was the arrangement

gave themselves up to the sole ~~[illegible]~~
guidance, or the disgraceful control,

not listen to the discoverer ~~[illegible]~~ of the Longitude

nor could there be a higher gratification on earth to him
than to see that object accomplished. But the Commissioners of Longitude, Board
who, of John Harrison had flattered him for his talent, would
have called him his brother mechanician / as Bellers worth did

The rest is all wet leather & prunella.

showed by his practice that the age of chivalry was gone, long before M^r. Burke's strictures appeared; who would have told him his substitute for "the soul of honour" was not worth a rap's end; since every convicted culprit at the Old Bailey would be well known to prefer reasons of convenience, or of cupidity, or of malice, or of propense —&c to the statutes at large, in his system of ethics.

Such are the incongruities stumbled over in the affairs of the world, if not at every step, yet often enough to excite the surprise of those who, by favour of some propitious incident, like the discovery of the journal of John & William Harrison, are tolerably enabled to separate the wheat from the tares. — It is certain the Commissioners of Longitude, in a case involving the safety of thousands of lives, & of millions of property, [illegible] the guidance of an individual who pretended to know every thing, but who knew nothing to any available purpose: who substituted the affectation of intelligence for the reality of it, improved by personal enmity withal. What the necessity of suppressing the above letter, that shows they would not listen to the Claimant — the only person capable of simplifying the construction of the Timekeepers, of reducing the expence & bringing them into use: The appointed claimant tells them "after ages will hardly believe that a mechanical "Invention, & one that allows of great improvement in its con "-struction, should be taken from the man that invented,

195 Singleton, his brother sergeant) were incapable of under-
-standing, or estimating the vast importance of this conci
-liation between the ambition of the Claimant & the wants of
the public. — He

-tiament on which he had pinned his faith
Thirds

Forty

his way to scientific

"it, & given to another to prosecute." — Yet this was done, he might have added; & done to gratify the Earl of Morton; even at the expence of throwing to the dogs the original act of Parliament, with Lord Sandwich's assurance attached as a rider to it. His ardour to extend his improvements was commensurate with his genius to effect them; but it did not follow that he would have been justified, having a family, & especially a son well entitled to share the fruits of his labour, if he had applied more than a moiety of his earnings of 40 years to the outgoings which his plan, or some modification of it, might have called for. In the course of his former transactions with the Commissioners, he had by suggestions & offers remarkably opposed to his interest, in the common acceptation of things, evinced a spirit that might be called chivalrous & romantic. In brief, the sentiments of this man of genius would have done honour to any station in society, though far above that which Providence allotted him. But it was widely different with the noble Thane who was so clever at Mowdi Distinction; who is first fiddle, counter tenor and double bass, wherever he comes; punching his colleagues before him, if they are out of time & tune in the piece he has got up. — The vulgar in general believe that all people they have business with will overreach, will impose, or them if they can; & applying this notion too diffusely, they do not discriminate between Franklin & Adams, nor attend to that diversity of good & bad which the theatre of the community exhibits. On the contrary it is objected of every gentleman that he should

the northern patrician so Deseret to the qualities which become his early station

overreach her

be candid towards his neighbour, if circumstances, obvious by their general admission, do not induce otherwise. These were never applicable to John Harrison; yet the attitude & credit-able physiognomy of some petty shopkeeper were what assumed towards his meal. He was the precise counterpart of an old Lady we knew, who, like his Lordship, affected uncommon shrewdness & discernment; to maintain which, it was her invariable custom to suppose that every person she had dealings with was actuated by sinister motives. Hence when the Commissioners of Sewers made her a very advantageous proposal for the drainage of some land she had in the outskirts of a large town, valuable to let for building, if the water could be carried off; seeing as usual nothing but a design to impose on her prudence, she rejected it; & as her solicitor told the Author, lost altogether £10,000 by her superior management. But — it is fitting to return to the letter Sir John Cust had the goodness to dictate for the Claimant, thus —

"My Lords & Gentlemen

"I received from your Secretary a "minute of the 26th. of last month.

I am willing to make two more Timekeepers, & hope "these will be reckoned sufficient; not doubting that, at the "same time, the honourable Board will be pleased to fix on a "method of trial which they shall undergo; not attended with "long delays, or voyages, &, if successful, I shall then receive "the other moiety of my reward.

"If the honourable Board think proper, as in my
"proposal before, to pay a sum of money for the Instrument
"[Timekeepers] I will give security of that or any other agree-
"ment; & if the honourable Board shall think it necessary
"that any other person shall be instructed by me in the making
"of Timekeepers, & will allow me an adequate sum for that pur-
"pose, I will instruct a good workman, as this is the only way
"method by which my invention will get into the world in any
"reasonable time.

"I would beg leave to acquaint the honourable Board,
"that as I have no model by me of the Timekeeper already de-
"livered for the use of the public, the making of others will be at-
"tended with great labour, difficulties & delays; so that I do not
"chuse care to undertake the making of them, unless the hon-
"ourable Board will please to let me have the use of the said
"Timekeeper, upon mine engaging to return it to them in
"the same condition at any time, upon receiving a fortnight's notice
"from their Secretary. I have the honour of subscribing

my Lords & Gentlemen
your very devoted &c

The reader may either find himself half inclined to
smile, wholly indignant, when he learns that to the letter dictated
from that quarter & delivered on the 24th
of May / William Harrison being in waiting / the answer could
not be got till October 22. five months after; all that time be-
ing beguiled by the Manager for no apparent end but to
insult & weary out the Claimant even though he was frustrating the
ostensible purposes of his own bill. The journals is silent on the

unless he was sure of being supported at the Board,
thought it useless to

~~from which little effect is to be expected, unless may~~
~~thought to savour~~ may be thought to savour

Thong2 kept so far back, bears that date: Besides, The next Board
was not held till January 10th the following year. The

waive

~~suspicious~~ suspicious Nature,
~~antipathies~~ antipathies which made him forego even the most com-
-mon considerations of humanity

Lucas

point, but it may be inferred Sir John Cust thought it useless to interfere with the dictum of the proud Scotsman, whose mere expression of the genius he could not emulate, but envied, more of the insolence of "a Jack in office" than the dignified demeanour expected from an aristocrat of such family & distinction. It was not that the Board had not agreed on the 24th & therefore had adjourned the 25th meeting, for by a cleverly resort to clock this manœuvring, the answer of the Commissioners, both individually & collectively whatever was their party or their opinions, would certainly have shrunk from the imputation of this disgraceful & harrassing delay: especially towards a man at such an age, & for which there could be no motive that would bear the light. But they should have remembered the question, & it is a very important one, might some day be asked — how came they to [illegible] their privileges, to transfer their power in this manner to an individual, who they might have seen (if they would) made the business before them subservient to personal [illegible] will? Or again, did he assume their authority to be summed up in ipse, because he thought nobody would dispute his pretensions, be it what warrant under the separate commission? Whereas [illegible] asserted to have had a majority that had no existence? — How happened it that Sir John Cust, as far as is known, was the only Commissioner disposed to stem this torrent of arrogance & egotistical demonstrations? [illegible] gentlemen & gentlemen who, with due respect, could be desirous

While however the Temporal Dictator of the Commission would have proclaimed a crusade against since the Claimant, with a plenitude of indulgences for all who took up missiles, it is not ascertained that he knew the prospects of the Lunar party, past, or present; who might have stolen into Paradise (or Purgatory) before he had time to trip up their heels. His own activity & display were enough to absorb the whole man; but the why & the wherefore of that influence by which he was enabled (we conjecture more from sufferance than persuasion) to retain his colleagues to so many men in bucklram, or in Kendal green, must be left where it was.

good natured folks

advantages which they might see he was annihilating if he could.

Chap II

requested to answer it attend to the interrogatory are long
gone where all must follow & as the circumstance of the mem-
-bers of this commission resigning their judgments implicitly
to the pilotage of so unintersting a character; to whom the
Longitude, & the case of John Harrison, were only secondary
matters, his own display & importance being the prime consi
-deration; will want an explanation, to those who are informed
that the proceedings under the act to explain, amend, & alter,
which Lord Morton very properly called his own, drew at length
the utmost attention, & unqualified reprobation from
George 3d. a list is subjoined, of those who sat at the Board
Made it, that if their descendants or representatives,
possess, or can give a reference to documents illustrative of
the surprising anomalies involved in this business they
may from patriotic inducements, & in a spirit of candour
give them to the world.

This answer (nominally of the Board) which though ac-
-tually composed in secret as many lines cost John Harrison
five months trouble, the public an equal loss, & suited no pur
-pose but to gratify the spleen of the Manager; who without
had a right to indulge a sardonic laugh at the expence of the
honourable men, who, good souls, enabled him at all times
to mount his hobby, while he talked himself out of wind to
them, concerning such & such advantages to the country;
~~about which he seems to have cared as much as Parson Bar-~~
~~nabee did for sermons, which Fielding says he loved "as~~
~~much as prayers do sin"~~ It was, after the ordinance of

"a Letter of this date [May 24th] from Mr. John Harrison
" was read"

Resolved, That he be acquainted that the Board do
" not require him to make any more Timekeepers than two;
" & that with respect to the other matters contained in his
" said Letter, they refer him to the Resolutions of the last Board,
" which have been already communicated to him."

The letter [redacted] embracing such important points as a distinct mode of Trial, & the reiterated request for the use of the successful Timekeeper, to which there was no reply in the resolutions they referred him to, & to which this was all the answer vouchsafed. This letter, dictated as described, notwithstanding its cogent importance to the public, was suppressed on the minutes; so that if those had been printed (as on a former occasion) it would have been impossible to judge of the merits of a reply turned over so long in the frying pan — if it falls at last into the fire, by the contempt which such conduct may be thought calculated to excite, it will also justify the strictures with which the Author finds constrained (from the documents before him) to visit the memory of this nobleman. Whose answer, for who will say it was that of the Commissioners? carefully avoids all allusion to what was pressed on his attention; & shows that species of cunning which in the end overreaches itself; for to judge from his expedients to secure an ill deserved attention, in which he was so oddly successful, no man more seriously be

believed he was not destined to be "swept away among the rapture of fame." To eschew which was his ruling passion; & hence his envy of the man of genius whom the Commissioners of Longitude, with such censurable indolence, & gross defici- ency of observation, enabled him to pinion, as much as he could, by refusing him all manner of facilities for prosecuting his labours; a fact almost incredible, & cer- tainly no where to be found on their minutes, but now rendered just beyond all doubt. To be copied for paper.

Premising that John Harrison designed no disrespect to Mr. Kendall, there can scarcely be two opinions as to whether the Inventor was not by far the best qualified to treat the absorbing question how to bring the Timekeepers into use, yet the Board under the direction of the P. R. S. decided to employ & pay that Watchmaker, at a greater cost to the pub- lic. Not only so, he was to be accomodated with the Time- keeper to have by him in prices to show to his workmen, as soon as the trial at Greenwich should be over, (an advantage which the Claimant had repeatedly entreated for in vain) & we read on the minutes of April 26th this year "That on "the inspection of the Plates engraved from the draw- "ings of Mr. Harrison's Watch, with the printed explana- "tions thereof, be delivered to him immediately upon the- "execution of the articles [of agreement]. And yet though they had deprived John Harrison of those most impor- tant drawings, we look in vain for the same courtesy, it been no more, being extended to him. —

honour scientifick mechanic

Mackie to the having these works by him is prosecuting his

further labours;

There is something so palpably like malice, or studied ignorance, in this disregard of his wants, that it is astonishing how any set of independent gentlemen could lend themselves to such purposes. The mathematicians though not friendly to the mechanics, would have denied any participation in the conduct of the Manager; & the whole affair would probably have resolved itself into his consummate effrontery. — Had George 3d. possessed a ring like that of Gyges, the shepherd, in antiquity; had he been invisibly present at the proceedings, & witnessed such mean subsersion, he would have been tempted to dispute the spell, & flashing intolerable day on "wicked Reverses" have told this Descendant of the hero of Chevy Chase, he wanted "a large cloth yard & more" of a serviceable cane, properly applied, to teach him more common humanity; & some consideration for the meritorious grey hairs of a genius he trampled on (with the cloven hoof he betrayed) whose fame would pervade all nations that [redacted], while he would himself be totally unknown "to man, woman, or child".

We now come to the delivery of the three Machines, which had been allowed to remain a few months longer with John Harrison, after the Timekeeper was given up to the Commissioners — whose Instructor, though [redacted] no better than his pupils, was well aware of the importance the Inventor attached to the having [redacted] These works by him; which alone, in accordance with the enmity he had manifested ever since

his defeat under the separate commission ~~as~~ or ~~separate~~ was sufficient reason for depriving him of them; which his colleagues, she might have discovered the circumstance by a few appropriate questions, appear never once to have thought of; but in a case of this magnitude, relied on the veracity of his statements, with as much coolness as if ~~half a crown~~ no more than half a crown, or a few pence had been involved (depended) in the issue. ~~This plenitude confidence, which it reveals so much to the dishonour of the Board to have indulged, for want of the commonest caution, was sufficient reason for depriving him of those his powers which so wrongful to him as he left in possession of his brother Edward of Lancaster~~ In this way the personal enemy & withal ~~heir~~ rival of the claimant ~~of Lancaster~~ however it may sound, withal, the rival of the claimant contemning the public interest, or despising consideration above his comprehension, adhered to the letter of a clause he had introduced in his bill, but not to be found in the original Act; the framers of which never contemplated the interference of a genius, whom the composing letters P. R. I. cannot rescue from the imputation of having been ushered into the world as much for the injury of science & of mankind, as John Harrison was for the benefit of both.

Promising that security might have been taken for this safe delivery in the event of his decease, had those things remained

" or Tomkenpers

~~Lewis defeated under the separate commission (which Lewis~~
~~colleagues never once thought of) was a sufficient reason~~
~~for depriving him of their confidence & services for the labours~~
~~for the benefit of the public, & not~~ of the public
~~which is a different way, & almost as much injured as~~
~~the mechanician.~~ For had they remained
in Red Lion Square ~~security being taken~~ with so superior a
Cicerone, & all in motion, they would have been a focus of
attraction to scientific men at home, & the resort of foreign-
-ers not a few. Many repaired to Hampstead Hill to see this
public property in the injured state in which the machines
got there: but who ever went to hear D.r Maskelyne's explanation
of their principles? This — on May 23.rd (the Day before the
Board met) appeared at John Harrison's house, with the follow-
-ing order, signed by six Commissioners; & dated on the 26.th of April

"M.r John Harrison

"We the undermentioned being part
"of the Commissioners appointed by Acts of Parliament for the
"discovery of the Longitude at Sea do hereby require you to
"deliver up to the Rev.d M.r ~~[illegible]~~ Nevil Maskelyne,
"Astronomer Royal, at Greenwich, the three several Machines
"now remaining in your hands, which are become the Property
"of the Public. Given under our hands at the Admiralty. &c

William Harrison attended with two witnesses, accord-
-ing to a memorandum by whom, the Gentleman expressed his
satisfaction at the apparent complete order in which he found
the Machines, & gave the certificate herewith.

"I do hereby [redacted] acknowledge to have received
of Mr. John Harrison, pursuant to the above order, the three
several Machines, or Timekeepers, in motion & by all appearance
in perfect order & good condition: as witness my hand. &c."

He then "prest Mr. Harrison to give him some direction
how he should convey the Machines to Greenwich? To which Mr.
Harrison replied, that as the Commissions had fully empowered
him to remove them, it would be very improper for him to give
any directions therein, especially as he, Mr. Maskelyne, might
if any accident should happen, then lay the cause thereof to
him (the said Mr. Harrison.) upon which Mr. Maskelyne & D. long,
who came in the interim, seemed extremely angry, & desired
Mr. Harrison would tell them whether he removed the same whole
or in pieces? On which he told them, that two of them he usually re-
-moved whole, & the large one in pieces. He then withdrew. However
Mr. Maskelyne, with disdain, declared that although Mr. Harrison would
not give any directions, or assistance, yet he knew as well as him
how to convey the Machines. About 4 o'clock he gave directions (to
the persons he had brought to carry them) for putting the machine
in the large frame; a smith being sent for, came accordingly, & with
a pair of pincers, in taking the same down, let it fall; which we
believe broke some of the movements therein, while Mr. Maske-
-lynes hand was [redacted] then upon it"

Such are the consequences when self sufficient men,
like the northern aristocrat, wriggle themselves into the manage-
-ment of concerns they are totally incompetent to direct. This re-
-mark may be extended to the Astronomer Royal, whom [redacted]
[redacted] it as ill become to accept a charge [redacted]

he was so conveyed to

Ashby to

They were transfered by land to Greenwich

jolted

[illegible], as it did his patron to nominate him to it. It were not easy to say which of these men thought highest of his accomplishments in mechanics, & the public were sufferers by it, as has been shown. Had not this love of display & the personal aversion of Lord Morton for the Harrison's prevented it, they would have been required to superintend the removal of the machines, which they would have been glad to have done, in order to their preservation. After being put up in the place assigned to them at the Observatory, & set a going, it would only have remained that they should be cleaned at intervals by a skilful hand, if necessary, & they would have been far more interesting than they still are in their damaged state.

~~What was the mode of conveyance to Greenwich does not appear, but to judge~~ To judge from the injury they received, for neither of the two smaller ones could be put in motion there, & exclusive of the large one so grievously marred by Vulcan & his principal, they must have been placed in a common cart ~~carriage with, or~~ without springs, to [illegible] over an execrable London pavement, such as it was in that day, & on to their destination. — The biographers of John Harrison consider these Machines as curious specimens of the progressive powers of genius, which ought to be preserved. But they were ignorant of the treatment they had received from the two Commissioners who rode on the backs of their colleagues; — & whose conduct was strikingly contrasted by that of Admiral Holbourn, the commanding officer at Portsmouth, in September 1761; who, when the third & smaller one ~~of the Brothers~~, which it had been de-

new paragh.

-signed should go to the West Indies, was to be reshipped for London, was so considerate, unsolicited, as to order the transport from Spithead into the harbour, that (as the journal says) the Timekeeper "might be put on board with less "danger!" But this Officer had no party predilections to to serve, neither did he affect uncommon skill in mechanics; had he wanted assistance, he would not have sent for a blacksmith, but some person skilled in clock-work. — It would be amusing, if it were not irksome to observe how these vain men overreached themselves; for the Manager at the end of his elaborate rules for the examination of the successful Watch-makers, thought it proper to add. — "That the three other "Machines, the Property of the Public, which are now in Mr. "Harrison's custody, be demanded, & sent to the Observatory; "that their rates of going may be compared with the regulator, "at the same time with the Watch." — Good indeed! but what became of so palpable an arrangement? — Had there existed any law for such purposes, might not his lordships person have been demanded with great propriety, to be confined within the boundary of his own estate, to prevent his doing so much mischief on the public boards boards; where such performers are not wanted, unless they will condescend to be door-keepers, scene-shifters, candle snuffers, &c.

from ◇611 Nature having endowed John Harrison with as much sensibility as commonly accompanies genius, it cannot be difficult to form an idea of the effect, not only of parting with these memorials of a life of good works, in a double

The custody

&c.

understood his duty

sense, but of being severed from them for ever under circumstances so ruinous to the persevering labour of many years.— The apathy shown to the feelings of a man of so much private worth, as well as public distinction, partook of those operations in anatomy, in which a passive subject of the brute creation is exposed to the razor, or the actual cautery of some zealous enquirer into the nervous system, some disputant concerning the seat of the sensorium, & whether the heart, or the brain, is most liable to be affected under experiments of his dexterity. It would have mitigated the privation had they been left at Slamstead Hill in apparent order & security; but this consolation to which they were consigned, alas! forbade.— This public property was in the first floor at Red Lion Square, & from the second, where was his study & work room, the master spirit that till then had presided over these works, collectively & in detail, heard the crash occasioned by the excusable ignorance of the Smith & the pertinacious folly opinion of the astronomer. Had he been conversant with Milton, the exclamation of Old Chaos might have occurred to the person "Havoc, & spoil, & ruin, are my gain."— If we imagine him present at this confusion worse confounded" & that instead of leaving the room from anguish, he had, in a paroxism of resentment, broken a cudgel over the head of this consummate Vandal— that the usual legal resort had followed, it is not likely any jury, if the defendants counsel [illegible], would have adjudged more than [illegible]

For a paragraph
to page 299 thus ^ to be inserted here

& the one which, ~~from was actually let fall~~, from the
gross mismanagement described, was actually let fall
~~was~~ that in the removal; was that
& a half. It had not been prejudiced by the rolling of the
ship in the Bay of Biscay, but experienced a different fate
when demanded by the Board of Longitude. And now —

one shilling, or, to mark their contempt, not more than one farthing damages to this deputy of a public trust; who, according to the witnessed statement, professed a perfect knowledge of all matters in hand, & — began with asking what he was to do! And — who commiserates not the veteran genius, who had achieved what till then was thought impossible; when from the upper window he saw these proofs of his inventive faculties carried off like common furniture? — the ship cracks; the wheels "grate harsh thunder" and "the iron entered into his soul."

The first in order of the Three Machines, was that which by direction of Sir Charles Wager had, in 1736, been sent to Lisbon. On its return from thence, though almost on a meridian, it corrected the reckoning of the Oxford near a degree & a half. But now — what said the trustees of this public property? who met on the 24th. of May, not aware of the letter dictated by Sir John Cust (which it took five months to answer in as many lines) but fully prepared for the rec. Neil Maskelyne's report of the transactions of the preceding day, & indeed without any other business apparently excepting to order the notes of the Astronomer Royal [he being so skilled in mechanics, to wit] to be printed along with those of the Gentlemen who had attended the disclosure of the Invention, & given in an appendix to the plates with the drawings & explanations thereof. — If the reader is impatient to know what circumlocutory process, or opake varnish, or method

known. D^r. Maskelyne, who in his writings (as far as the Author knows) took care to preserve a religious silence on the subject; as he has also done on the original quarrel at Barbadoes, which he forgot it furnished a suitable comment on, was never required to repair

Two men who

-Dical arrangement of syllogisms, Tropes & figures, cut & dry from Alma Mater, was employed to mystify those Commiss-oners whose wits were not in the Moon, he will be wholly disappointed; for the Manager & his deputy through whose affec-tation, & concealing their ignorance, so much injury was done to these curious machines, with one exception, before mentioned, knew too well the men of straw they had to deal with, whose duty it cer-tainly was to have been certified of the safety of this public property (always so called) but who all slept on their watch, instead of seizing the helm, & kicking down the hatchway ladder, head or heels foremost, these mechanical im-postors. — Instead of the long report of the transfer, & still longer exculpation of the disasters on the 23d., not a word of either will be found on the minutes; this suppression having it seems been resorted to as the preferable course, by the two principals implicated in this disgraceful affair: with whom Professor Lory would have shared the reproach, had the particulars been thus known. Dr Roebuck [illegible] to repair the serious injury to these machines out of his own pocket, under the inspection of the Inventor, as he should & would have done, had not the spirit of party superseded that of equity, in this commission, as it is liable to do in others, which these get the name of jobs. The job here was not lucrative, but it administered to the self consequence of [illegible] marmalade; had an inordinate appetite for such

214 & 215 ~~[illegible]~~

to improve the saccharine of which the whole conduct of the Manager

by the Manager, [illegible] shows, that had
John Harrison been made responsible for the safe removal of
this public property, & had any thing happened; not "the
"act of God, or the Kings enemies;" he would have been requir-
-ed to make good the damage, at his own expence, to the uttermost
farthing! His oppressor, like Shylock, would have "found it
"in the bond"; but he did not find in the act of Parliament
he called his own, that he was to grant him any facilities, including
the use of these machines — "It was not in the bond." —
Such was the unequal proportion of good & evil weighed out
to his rival by the northern lubber, whom these gallant Admi-
-rals suffered to pipe all hands in chase, & steer them to run
down, if he could, the renowned genius whose barks, with
some splicing & caulking from George 3.d, rides on the ocean of
time with a light at her mast head, that shatters its rays
afar over Europe [illegible] reflected to Australia. stop here

The succeeding Board was held January 10th. 1767 at
which two letters were read, which the Chairman had addressed
to Sir Charles Saunders; complaining of the conduct of some
of the Gentlemen who had been appointed to receive the explan-
-ation of the Invention; & stating that Monsieur Berthoud
a Watchmaker of eminence, employed by the French Govern-
-ment, had called on him for the purpose of purchasing, if
he could, the secret of the mechanism of the Timekeeper.
to △ 6143
to which he (the maker of it) had no objection. Sir Charles having
transmitted these letters to the Commissioners, they sent for Mr.
Mudge, & interogated him (March 14th.) It appeared that having

-ed ; either

dined at the Table of Count Brühl, the Saxon minister; a noble-
man remarkable for his knowledge of chronometry; he had
there met the foreigner spoken of; to whom, in conversation,
he explained by drawing with a pencil, & by the Count's in-
terpretation, what were the peculiarities of the Timekeeper.
But he professed not to know that M. Berthoud had at-
tempted to purchase the secret of the Inventor; & had no
idea he was irregular in this communication; for to the ques-
tion — Did you think yourself at liberty, after receiving the
"said explanation [of the principles] to communicate the same?
he answers "I thought it my duty to do it, & that it was the
"intention of the Board I should do so." Again — To what num-
"-ber of English Workmen did you communicate it? answer
— "To 10 or 12 I believe, & to several Gentlemen curious in
"mechanics besides. — M. Mudge, who otherwise must have
wanted an adequate motive for his conduct, it is fair to con-
-clude had neither seen nor heard of the terms for regulating
the intended explanation, offered by the Commissioners to
the Claimant, May 30. 1765, & immediately assented to
by him; in which — "the [sic] Gentlemen are to be upon
"oath, not to divulge the Invention to any one, till they shall
"have leave from the Board of Longitude; & the Commissi
"-oners were also to be upon their honour, not to tell it
"till they had given Mr. Harrison an opportunity to make
"what he could of other powers." — This agreement though
it exhibits the usual predilection of the Manager for oaths,
does not appear to have been shown to the Gentlemen who attend-
-ed either before, or after, the Watch was taken to pieces in their

obligation of the oath required

out. The purpose of enjoining the Gentlemen to se-
-crecy, or oath, implicating also the honour of the Com-
-missioners individually, was thus frustrated. But af-

presence: for the opinion of another of them, the rev. William Ludlam, shortly after the disclosure, found its way into the newspapers & periodicals of the time. But notwithstanding this breach of the conditions settled, our Mechanician with a delicacy seldom found in the sphere of life he had risen from, though he would have thankfully received any gratuity by other Governments in an open manner, thought it incompatible with the reservation enjoined on the Gentlemen who had attended the disclosure, had he made the particulars of his invention available before the publication of the plate should wholly set aside the reservation required from them by the explicit terms of the 30th May, but the substitution for which on the minutes of the Board is — "that "they be enjoined not to make any discovery of the principles "of the Watch to any but the Board, without leave of the Com "missioners." — This injunction however was followed up in so slovenly a manner, that, as has been seen, Mr. Mudge, in apparent simplicity, considered it his duty to explain the particulars to any clever person that applied to him. Had the direct question been put. Did you know you was not to disclose what you might learn without leave from the Board? The answer, which must have been in the negative, would have implied slight neglect in some responsible quarter; & therefore was wisely left out; as is also all mention of — whether the Board came to any resolution or not in this enclosed affair

Notwithstanding the constant refusal the Claimant has experienced in his applications for the loan of the Timekeeper

218

-er [having] -ed perceiving the sequel of Lord Sandwich's tautological assurance, & witnessing the activity of the Earl of Morton to efface away alter, amend & efface away, as far as he possibly could the benefits of that Act which had been the source of his labours (although directly contrary to the opinion of the Attorney General) the Claimant had no consolation but that which a high-minded man of integrity always finds — the "self approving hour", which Pope eulogizes in his Ethics. back to C 217 second line from the bottom

"-ers above mentioned

not being given on the minutes, the omission is supplied from one of the printed Facts. Their substitute for it

The Earl of Morton, as

-er, yet having, it is likely, ascertained that at a Board
appointed for April 11th Lord Morton, whose oppressive con-
duct there was no contending with, & who suffered no dissent
from his opinion, would not be present, he is found giving
in a memorial; in which he offers "to make two other Time-
"keepers, to undergo a fixed Trial, having the last made one
"left him to go by: & at the same time proposing a mode
"of Trial." — This say the Minutes "the Board having taken
"into consideration, & called in, & severally discoursed with
"the said Mr. Kendall & Mr. [redacted] Harrison jun.r did not
"at present think fit that the Watch should be delivered
"into the hands of Mr. Harrison; as Mr. Kendall has repre-
"sented that he cannot execute the parts of the [redacted]
"Timekeeper he has undertaken to make in the exact pro-
"portion proposed by Mr. Harrison to be necessary, without
"having it in his possession; & therefore must fail in his
"engagement with the public; for the fulfilling of which he
"has already postponed his private business. — In respect to
"the mode offered by Mr. Harrison for the trial of the two Timekeep-
[redacted], when completed, the Board was of opinion the same would
"not be sufficient. Therefore &c."[redacted]

The trial proposed by the Claimant ~~which probably had a resemblance in Duration to that of the 12th of Queen Anne, as he was perfectly justified in doing it, in that respect, in the Minutes, but their substitute for it is, which~~ was first — that the Timekeepers should go for ten months to Hamstead Hills, to be examined impartially under the restraints to prevent any tampering, or collusion, drawn up by [redacted] before given. Afterwards to be sent for two months" on board of a

219

oddly enough There

" ship in the Downs; under the same precautions of security
" the said Timekeepers under locks (with different keys, one
" trusted to different persons) as were made use of in the voyages
" to Jamaica & Barbadoes." — Directions are given concerning the
temperature they are to be kept in, but, strange to say, there
is no mention of the clock, or regulator, with which they
were to be compared. Did the Commissioners of Longitude really
forget this requisite too? It is certain there is no allusion to
the plan formerly proposed by Dr. Halley, which was the only
mode in which they could be tried in the Downs, or a roadstead,
but which the Manager, as before shewn, appeared not to know
of. — "Mr. Harrison jun." was called in, & acquainted with these
" resolutions, a copy whereof he desired to have for his Father's
" information (which was granted) though he at the same time
" declared he was confident his Father would object to the mode
" of trial proposed by the Board, both as to the time & place."
And — Where is the singularity if he did? — For six weeks, the com-
-mon duration of a West India voyage bore no proportion
to twelve months which they were now forcing on him, being
only as one to eight or nine. And, as to the mode of trial, The
Claimant had himself been willing to vary it; observing ( )
" there were several that would do more justice to the Timekee-
-per"; but this was before it was put on shipboard for the
final examination. After which no power on earth could
alter it, without consent of the Inventor, unless it implied a
dereliction of those principles which equally constitute
the basis & the cement of society. This the Earl of Morton

220 Insert at ww 8/21 and to Those conversant with Rambler may immediately recall a forcible remark or that sets of delinquents with whom the functionaries spoken of assimilated themselves too closely — "It is "impossible to see the long scrolls in which every con- "-tract is included, with all their appendages of seal "& attestations, without wondering at the depravity of "those beings who must be restrained from violation "of promise by such formal & public evidences, & predu "-ced from equivocation & subterfuge by such punctil "-ious minuteness. Among all the satires to which folly "& wickedness have given occasion, none is equally severe "with a bond or a settlement." — We will yet say, those le -gal formalities would not have been wasted here, had not the contemptible subtlety of the Lunar party, foreseeing the disparagement of their Diana & the injury to their craft, contrived to prevent this memorable assurance from appearing on the minutes, — where it can no more be found than their reiterated refusal of all pow -er of faculties to a man verging fourscore: both most unhappily contravening the Peasants sentiment, that "the English never deceive".

But where was the Nobleman, it seems fitting to ask, whose who has left his conduct to be commented on when

New forms arise & diff'rent views engage

— whose dislike

220 Insert at ww 8121

Rambler may immediate
or that class of delinquents
spoken of assimilated the
" impossible to see the lo
" -tract is included, with
" & attestations, without
" those beings who must be
" of promise by such forma
" -ded from equivocation
" -ious minuteness. Amon
" & wickedness have given o
" with a bond or a settlement
-gal formalities would not re
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craft, contrived to prevent
from appearing or the mis
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-ver of faculties to a man o
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" the English never deceive."

But where was th
ask, whose who has left his
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New forms arise & diff
— whose dislike